

AIR BUCKS

TECHNICAL SUPPLEMENT
AND TUTORIAL

Impressions Software Inc.
Software Copyright 1992 Impressions
All rights reserved worldwide
This Manual Copyright 1992 Impressions
All rights reserved worldwide. No portion of this
manual may be copied, reproduced, translated or
reduced to any electronic medium or machine-
readable form without the prior written consent of
Impressions Software Inc.

IBM PC - INSTALLATION AND LOADING

Air Bucks **cannot** be run from a floppy drive - it must be installed to a hard disk. When fully installed, it will take up about 2 megabytes of hard drive space.

Hard Drive Installation

Turn on machine, and wait for DOS prompt (C:\ etc.) — exit Windows or Dos-Shell if they run automatically on startup.

Insert disk 1 in a floppy drive, and access that drive by typing

A: <ENTER>

or

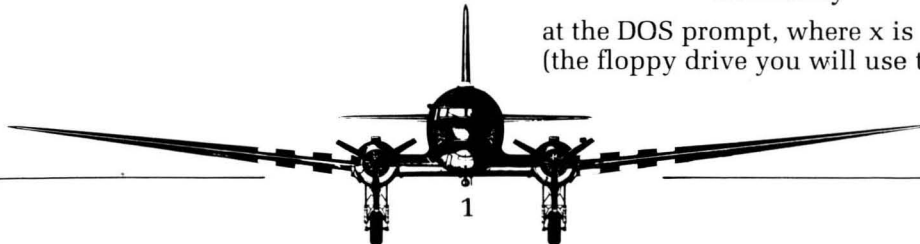
B: <ENTER>

— whichever is appropriate for your PC.

There are four choices of installation programs you can run; your source drive and destination drive determine which one you should use. To install Air Bucks, type

INSTALxy

at the DOS prompt, where x is the source drive (the floppy drive you will use to put the game



disks in), and y is the destination drive (the hard drive you wish to use to store the game). You can install this game from either drive A or B, and onto either hard drive C or D. The four options are therefore: INSTALAC, INSTALAD, INSTALBC and INSTALBD.

The install program makes a directory on your hard drive called AIRBUCKS, and copies all the files on the disks there. The program will prompt you on-screen when you need to switch disks.

Loading from the Hard Drive

From the DOS prompt (see step 1, above, if you are not there already), type

C: <ENTER>

or

D: <ENTER>

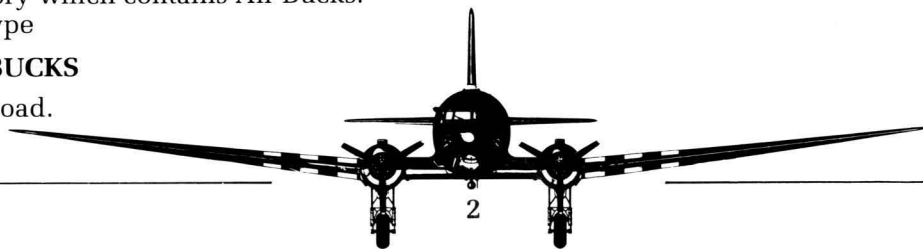
to access the hard drive where you installed Air Bucks, then type

CD\AIRBUCKS <ENTER>

to select the directory which contains Air Bucks. To run the game, type

AIRBUCKS

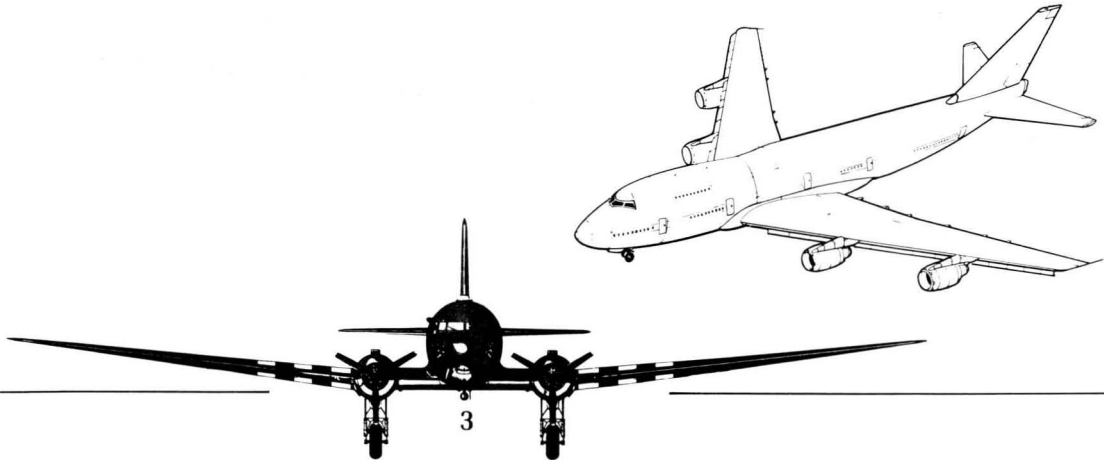
and the game will load.



The Options Panel

After loading the game, you will be presented with an options panel. You may select whether to use an AdLib or compatible sound card (if you have one or not), and whether or not to use the mouse. A mouse is recommended for playing Air Bucks.

To use the panel, type the number of an option to toggle it; or move to an option with the up- and down-arrows, and use the left- and right-arrows to change it. Pressing <ENTER> or typing the number "3" for the Start Game command exits the options panel and begins the game.



TUTORIAL

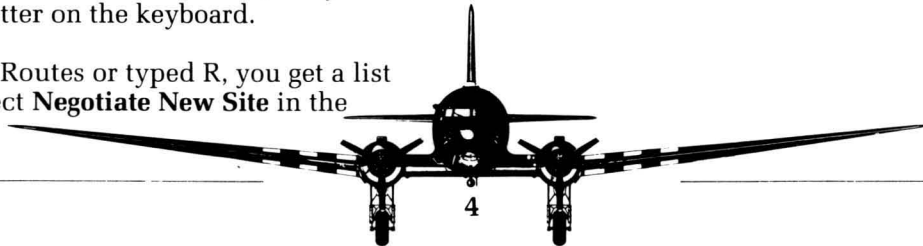
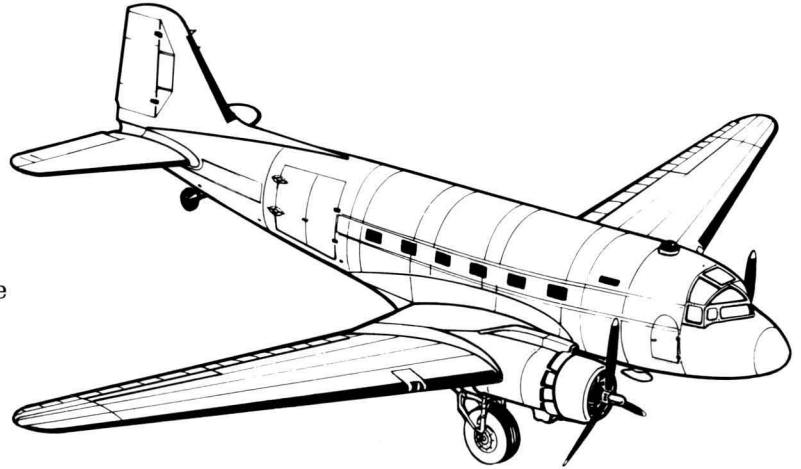
Anxious to make your first million? We understand. That's why we've worked out this brief tutorial for you. By the time you're done with it, you'll have your first major landing site, your first route to travel and your first plane in the air. But most importantly, you'll start the money rolling in!

In Air Bucks, the two things you need are planes to fly and places to send them. You start with only one plane - a Dakota DC-3, flight number AB0. It'll get you started.

However, you only have permission to land at one airport - Miami. Unless you get rights to another airport, you're looking at a pretty short trip. So, use the menu bar across the top of the screen to select the **Routes** menu.

Selecting from Menus: You always select menus and commands by moving the mouse pointer onto them and clicking the left mouse button, or by typing their first letter on the keyboard.

Having clicked on Routes or typed R, you get a list of commands. Select **Negotiate New Site** in the same way.



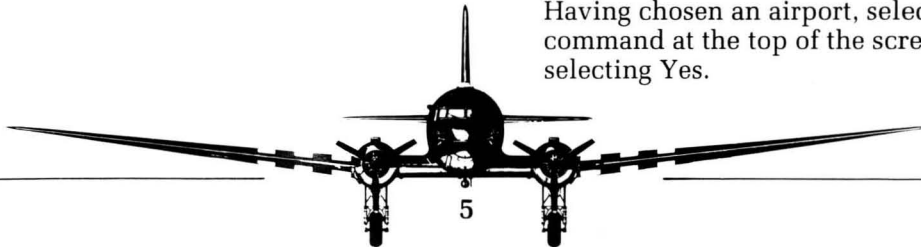
All the black dots that appear on the map are airports that you can buy rights to. New York is a good bet to start with.

Selecting Airports: Specify an airport by clicking directly on it with the mouse. Alternatively, use the Next and Previous commands to step through the whole list.

Try and select New York. It's 900 miles northeast, up the coast from the red dot which is Miami. When you've got it, you will see its name on the bar at the bottom of the screen.

If you can't get New York, or want to choose another city, **any airport within 1,000 miles** of you will do. 1,000 miles is the maximum distance your DC-3 can fly. The distance from a site to your nearest airport (in this case, your only airport) is the third piece of information in the bar on the bottom of the screen.

Having chosen an airport, select the **Acquire** command at the top of the screen, and confirm by selecting Yes.



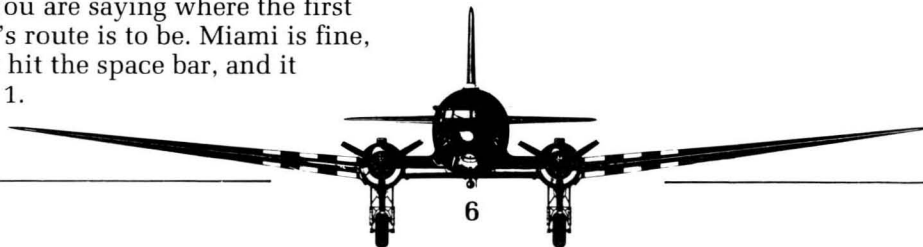
It'll take a while for your landing rights to come through, so you'll have to wait. **Game time only passes when you aren't in a menu**, so get out of Negotiate and the Routes menu.

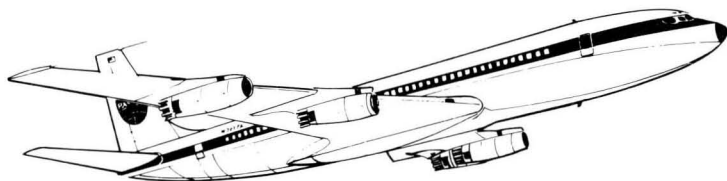
Quitting a Menu: To jump out of a menu, hit the space bar or click completely outside of the selection area.

After a while, the date on the bottom left of the screen should change from OCT 1946 to NOV 1946, and you will be told that you have landing rights at New York.

Creating a Route: Your plane is now allowed to go to New York, although it won't until you tell it to. So, the next thing to do is give Plane AB0 a new route. Select the **Routes** menu again. When that appears, choose the **Alter Route** command, and after that the **Make** option.

Click on the figure 1 in the center section of the screen, or type 1. You are saying where the first stop on your plane's route is to be. Miami is fine, so just select **Ok** or hit the space bar, and it should go into slot 1.

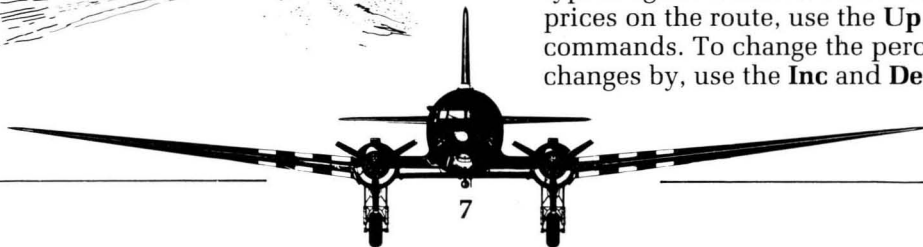




Now select slot 2 and select New York on the map (the Next command should get you there quickly). Confirm again with Ok or the space bar. You should now have Miami and New York as the stops on your route. Ok or the space bar will confirm the whole choice. You need to select the **Assign** command to leave the routes screen (remember, you are still inside the Alter Routes command).

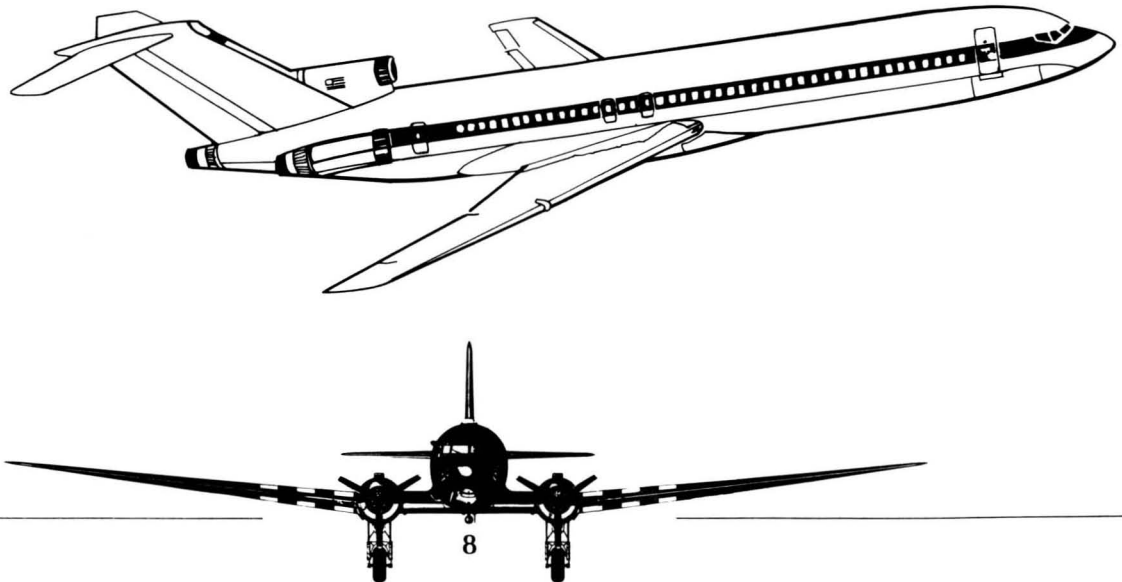
Select Ticket Prices from the Routes menu (it should still be on the screen). The screen that appears shows the prices you are going to charge for each class of travel on each leg of your trip. Try \$125 for all first class travel, \$80 for second and \$75 for cargo.

Changing Prices: To say which price you want to change, either click on the figure itself in the table, or move around the pricing grid with the cursor keys. To actually change the number, just type it again. To make mass changes to all the prices on the route, use the **Up** and **Lower** commands. To change the percentage difference it changes by, use the **Inc** and **Dec** commands.



When you are happy, use **Ok** or the space bar to get back to the **Routes** menu, and quit out of that.

After a few seconds' delay, your plane status should change from **Idle** to **Miami** or **New York**, and the cash should start rolling in. You're on your way!



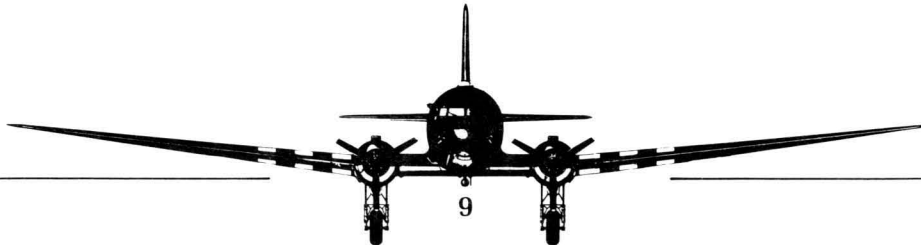
ADDENDA

Additional commands were added, and game aspects were changed, after the **Air Bucks** manual went to press. They are explained below, grouped by the menu they appear on or affect.

MAIN MAP SCREEN

There is a small error in the manual. The airline logo is located in the lower left corner of the screen, not in the lower right.

You must first clear all menus from the screen before you can change the current airline.



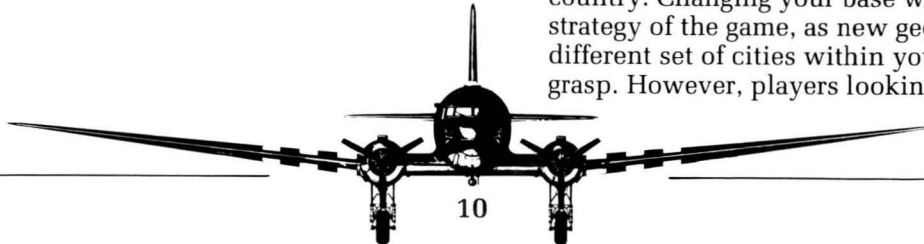
GAME OPTIONS (AIR BUCKS MENU)

Difficulty Options

There are two options to increase the difficulty of the game, in addition to randomizing city size. Located in the **Difficulty** window, they are New Plane Each Year and Base.

New Plane Each Year speeds up the debut of new plane models, which would normally appear on a more occasional and historically accurate schedule. A new plane each year means that greater distances will be easily crossable much sooner in the game; all airlines will be able to expand more rapidly — if they can afford it. Consider this a method of playing a “short game” of Air Bucks. You can toggle this option on or off within the first month — but not at all after that.

Base allows you to change the city that your airline is based in. With it, your first landing site need not be in Miami; it can be anywhere, in any country. Changing your base will affect the strategy of the game, as new geography puts a different set of cities within your immediate grasp. However, players looking for exclusive



markets would be advised to look elsewhere. All four airlines begin from the same site, no matter what it has been changed to. Remember that all your planes are delivered to your base when first purchased. You can only use this option right at the start of the game, and cannot later change it — so be careful!

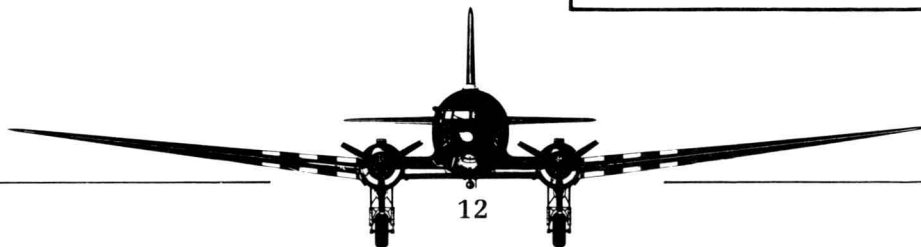
To change your base, use the + and - keys, or select them with the mouse. They will cycle backwards and forwards through all the cities on the map. **Warning:** Be careful not to choose an airport that is further than 1,000 miles from every other city, otherwise you will not be able to do anything with your DC-3.



ROUTES MENU

Site Trade

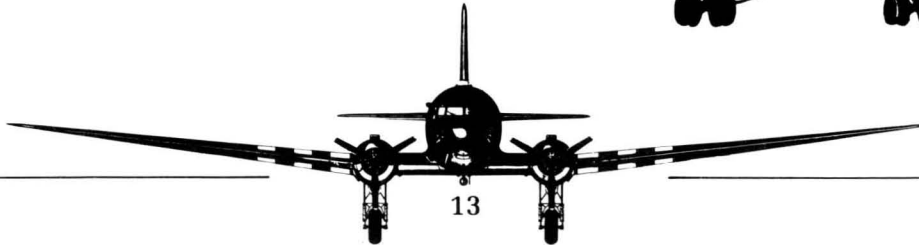
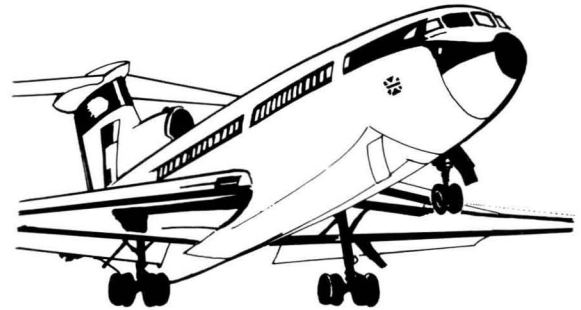
To enter in a bid for a landing site offered for sale by a competitor, just type in your offer and press <ENTER>. There are no Increase or Decrease commands.



PLANES MENU

Reliability

You can choose any percentage using the **Increase** and **Decrease** commands. Selecting **High**, **Medium** or **Low** will set the percentage to a preset number for that level. The higher the percentage, the higher your maintenance costs, but the lower your repair bill should be. You will need to set a level you can both make money at and be comfortable with.



FINANCES MENU

Taxation

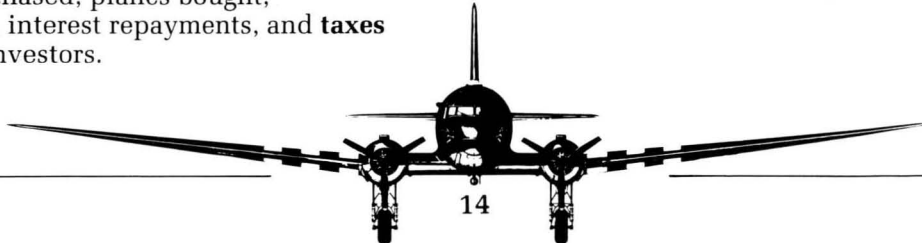
Taxes are applied to any profits you make at a rate of 35%. Taxes are paid (grudgingly) from your balance at the end of each **year**. Make sure you have built up a large enough balance to cover it by December, or you may be forced to take out a loan — or even bankrupted out of the game! Tax bills can be large!

Financial Graphs: Annual Worth / Valuation

The use of the name “Annual Worth” in the manual is incorrect. The name is now **Valuation**, to avoid confusion with the Yearly Worth graph.

Profit and Loss Report (Bottom Line)

Some outgoing costs were omitted from the Bottom Line report. The complete list of outgoings are: general (fuel, staff, and **advertising**) costs, landing rights purchased, planes bought, maintenance costs, interest repayments, and **taxes** and dividends to investors.

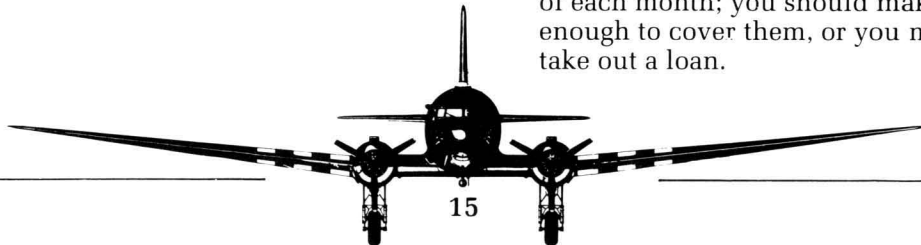


Employee Wages

The attitude of your pilots, flight attendants and ticket-counter attendants has a definite effect on your business; and one sure way of souring the mood of your employees is to pay them poorly. The **Wages** command lets you set wages, and thus improve or hinder business. The more profit you make, the larger share your staff feel they deserve; you may need to adjust this rate regularly to keep them happy.

Use **Increase** or **Decrease** to change the percentage of wages paid (the percentage is based on a hypothetical maximum). Two statistics are displayed to help guide your decision: Wages Paid this Year and Turnover. **Wages Paid this Year** shows how much you have spent on payroll. **Turnover** indicates total fares for the year.

Wages are deducted from your balance at the end of each month; you should make sure you have enough to cover them, or you may be forced to take out a loan.



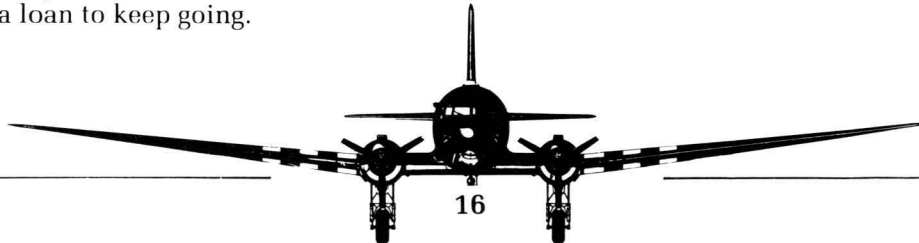
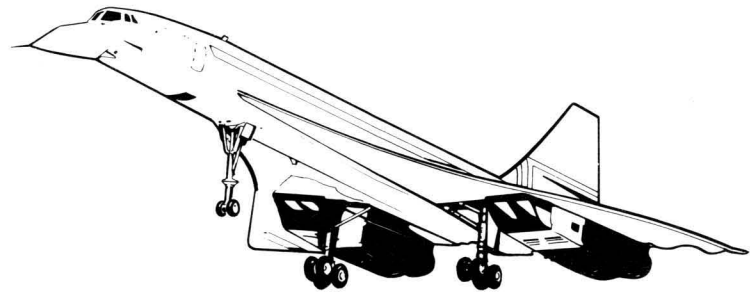
Advertising

Advertising can improve your sales. You can use the **Advertising** command to adjust your airline's advertising policy.

Two figures are displayed: **Ad Spend to Date** tells you how much you have invested in advertising, and **Turnover** tells you your total fares for the year, which you should use as a guide for setting the advertising expenditure.

Use **Alter Ad Spend** to change the annual Advertising budget. A maximum budget for that moment will be displayed to guide you, and you will be prompted to type in the new budget. Enter the number with the keyboard and press ENTER to continue.

Advertising money is deducted from your balance at the end of every month. If your balance is too low, the deduction may cause it to bottom out, and you may need a loan to keep going.

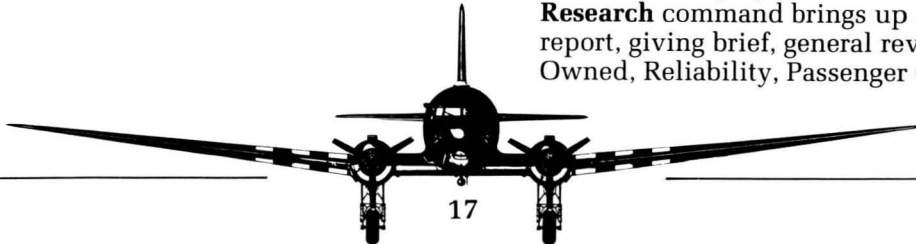


Advertising adds one other, important feature — the **Slogan**. Selecting this option brings up an Air Bucks billboard, and a text editor that allows you to enter a new, one-line slogan. Press ENTER or click the mouse to continue when you have finished typing.

Many an airline's ad campaign has hinged on a one-line motto that you can't help but remember. Slogans will pop up in the game from time to time, but the choice of slogan does not affect gameplay. Even so, we recommend you try something like these: Air Bucks - **Better than Walking**; Air Bucks - **We Want Your Money**; or Air Bucks - **Transglobal Stinks**.

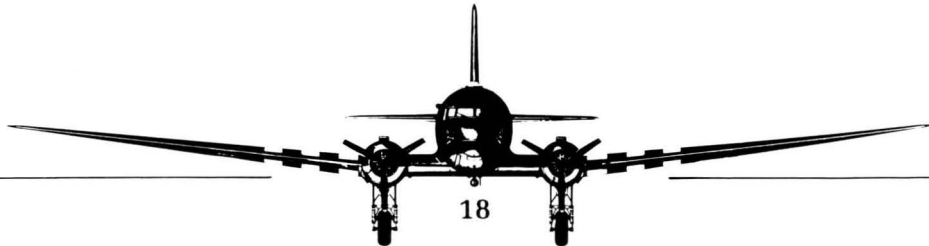
The Market Research Report

This powerful feature will advise you on how your airline is doing, and what you should consider changing about it. Selecting the **Research** command brings up a commissioned report, giving brief, general reviews of Sites Owned, Reliability, Passenger Comfort, In-Flight



Service and Brand Recognition. Through these five reviews, it will notify you how you are handling (or mishandling) most aspects of your airline. If you are losing money, this is a good way to find out why.

However, all this helpful information doesn't come cheap. There is a charge for each report you commission, so use this feature wisely. The charge is \$20,000 at the start of the game — but rises over time.

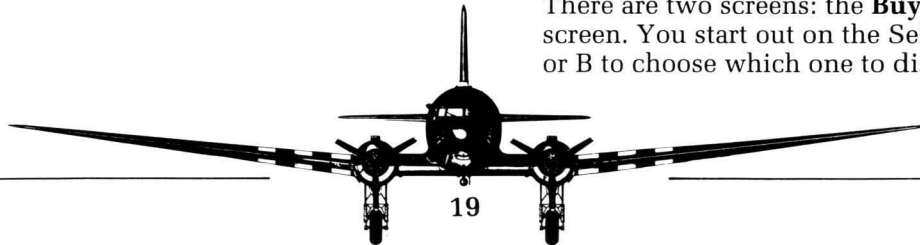


Another Overview of the Stock Market

Here, in brief, is an example/explanation of how the stock market works. You begin your company with 100 shares. Let's say that right now your company is worth \$100,000 dollars. Each of your current shares is worth \$1,000 — and so will any other shares created at that time. So, if you sell 20 additional shares, they will sell for \$1,000 each, and your company will receive \$20,000 for them. Now your company is worth \$120,000, and there are 120 shares, and so **each stock is still worth \$1,000**. And you have \$20,000 in new cash to spend on new sites and planes, increased advertising etc.. However, you have to pay dividends to each person who owns shares, and if you sell too many (more than you own), you lose control of your own business.

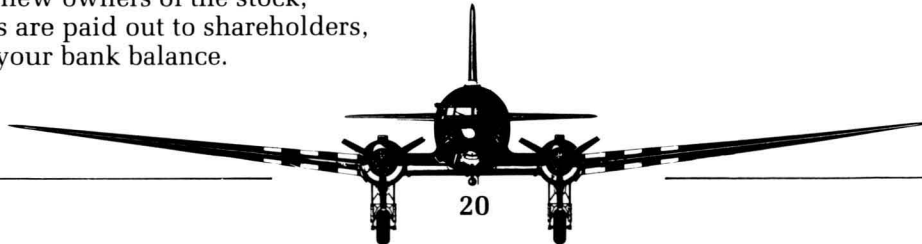
Buying and Selling - the Stocks Screen

There are two screens: the **Buy** screen and the **Sell** screen. You start out on the Sell screen. Select S or B to choose which one to display.



On the **Sell** screen, there is a grid representing each company's stocks, divided by its owner. The names on the left represent the stock **owners**; the names across the top show **which** stocks are owned. Each company starts with 100 shares owned in their own company. (In reality you, the owner, own these shares in your airline — companies are not allowed to own all the stock in themselves.)

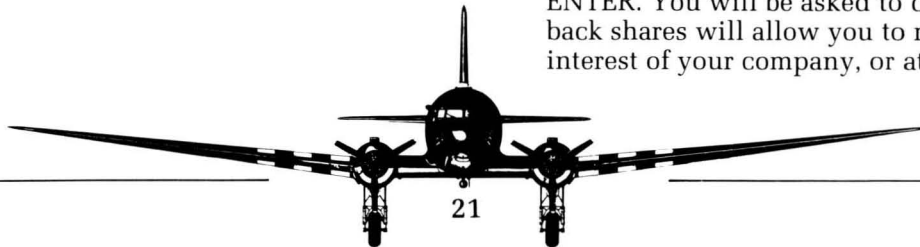
To sell shares, use the mouse or cursor keys to move the asterisks to one of the kinds of stocks you own. Then type **A** or click on **Action** to make a sale; type in the number of shares to sell and press ENTER, and answer Yes to confirm the sale. Selling stocks owned by another company puts them out on the market. As discussed above, selling your **own** stocks actually creates new shares, and puts them on the market for people (and other airlines) to purchase. Putting them on the market gives you additional revenue from the money paid by the new owners of the stock; however, dividends are paid out to shareholders, and are a drain on your bank balance.



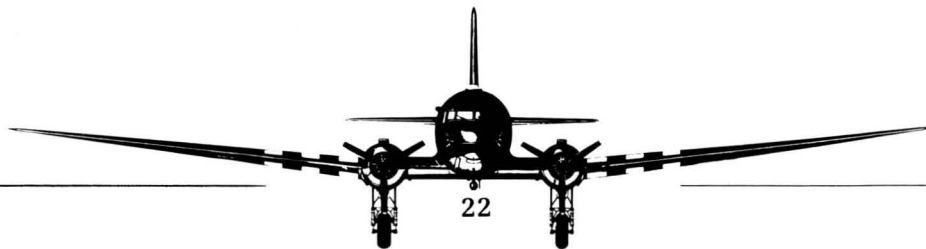
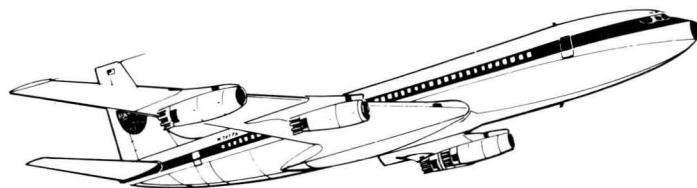
If none of the other airlines buy your stocks, they will be purchased by other buyers in the stock market — and will be available for purchase back by you (or the other airlines) at a later date, should you so wish.

Also, remember that if you sell new shares such that you no longer own fifty percent or more of the total shares, you lose control of your company. This is not the same thing as selling fifty or more of your shares, because in selling them you actually create new ones, and the 1-to-1 proportion of shares to percentage points no longer exists.

To **Buy** a stock from (of all things) the Buy screen, select one of the four share listings at the top of the now-empty grid. A listing of “0” means that there are no shares of that stock currently on the market. Select **Action** while on a stock that is available, type in the number desired, and press ENTER. You will be asked to confirm. Buying back shares will allow you to regain controlling interest of your company, or at least cease paying



dividends to outside shareholders. Additionally, buying shares is a good way to gain controlling interest in **another** company; you will receive dividends from the shares you own. If the other airline does well, you will gain — and the end-of-year messages will recognize your achievement. You, of course, will have the satisfaction of knowing that, as owner, it is **you** who are the real winner!



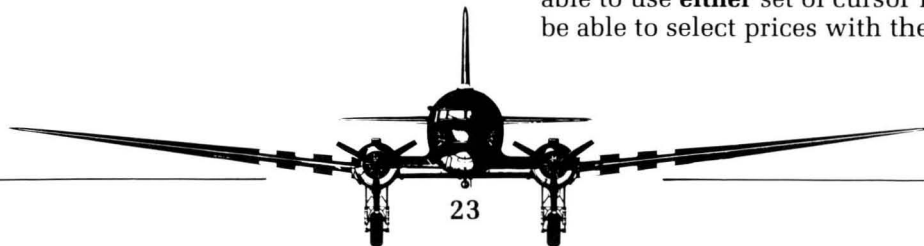
KEYBOARD COMMANDS

IMPORTANT: Keyboard commands will only work if the **Caps Lock key is turned off**. If you suddenly lose all response from the keyboard, make sure that Caps Lock is not lit.

In Air Bucks, nearly every accessible keyboard command is displayed on screen; to use a certain command or open a particular menu with the keyboard, just type the letter highlighted in that command, as it appears on screen.

Ticket Price Grid — When creating or changing ticket prices, use the cursor keys to move around the grid of prices. The highlighted price is the one currently selected. All other commands are displayed on the screen

Additionally, prices are entered using the numbers on the keyboard or the numeric keypad. However, if the Num Lock key is lit, and numbers can be typed using the keypad, you will not be able to use **either** set of cursor keys. You will still be able to select prices with the mouse.



Impressions